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CONTEMPORARY WARS.

FROM 1853 TO 1856.

BY PAUL LEROY BEAULIEU.

PRELIMINARY SUGGESTIONS.

The important legislative debates which for some weeks have kept the country in a state of suspicion and uneasiness, and imbued the public mind with the most painful apprehensions, have imparted to all the circumstances of contemporary wars a prominent reality and interest. Questions of military statistics, previously interesting to only a few persons, have suddenly acquired, in the estimation of all, an incontestable importance.

Hence we do not shrink from presenting to our readers a work bristling with figures and facts. We have determined to indicate, with the utmost possible exactness, the material losses, both of money and of men, involved in the great wars which have afflicted mankind from 1853 to 1866, and which constitute, to use the graphic expression of one of our Deputies, *the bill of cost* of each war.

The ground upon which we are about to enter has not been thoroughly explored hitherto. The material losses comprise the losses of men and of money; the losses of men are enumerated in the official statistics, and the losses of money are set forth in the respective budgets.

A minute exactness is often difficult. There is an abundance of official documents respecting the loss of men, but they are sometimes contradictory; the greater part of them are issued too soon after the war, and this precipitancy is a cause of much inaccuracy. As regards the two great wars in the Crimea and in the United States, and also as to the Schleswig War, so far at least as Prussia is concerned, we have been enabled to attain complete precision. For these wars have been described in large and comprehensive histories, in which the losses have been studied, enumerated, and classified, systematically and scientifically. The official reports of the Crimean War presented to the British Parliament, the remarkable book of Dr. Chenu, the various memorials composing "the Medical and Chirurgical History of the American Rebellion," the very recent publication by Dr. Læffleur on the "Schleswig Campaign," are works of scientific exactness. Unfortunately the documents respecting other wars possess neither similar value nor authority.

As regards finances, also, we have met with some embarrassing difficulties. There is a means of calculating financial losses, which is in vogue with our statesmen, and which has met with general favor—it is to add together the various loans contracted on account of war, and to take the sum of these different loans for the amount of the expenses of the war. Nothing is more simple, but nothing is less exact. In fact, it often happens that sums of money borrowed in view of a war, are only partially expended upon such war. Thus, the loan contracted in 1859 by France, was not entirely absorbed by the Italian War, and the considerable portion which was not required by the war was diverted by a special law to works of public utility. Further, it often happens that the sum of the loans is very far

from being equivalent to the sum of the expenses of a war. It is necessary to take cognizance of the revival of old imposts, or of the establishment of new taxes, of the use of extraordinary resources, and of important sums which may have been procured by the reduction of civil expenses, or by the transfer of accounts. Thus the expenses of England for the Crimean War were four times greater than the loans which she contracted during that struggle.

The only rational means of arriving at moderate precision is to study carefully the war-budgets during the contest, and to compare these with those of the preceding period of peace. In order to do this we must know what the budgets are. But there are States which have none, or rather, had none. Thus, the expenses of Russia during the Crimean War will always be difficult to calculate, notwithstanding the able researches of MM. Leon Faucher and Wolowski. It also happens that, certain wars being very recent, we do not possess their complete budgets, or returns of expenditure. In some countries these returns take a long time for their completion. We know that it was only in the session of 1867 that the French Legislative body voted the law to sanction the financial returns of 1863.

And even when we have been enabled to determine with precision the total expenses of war to the belligerent countries, we are still far from a knowledge of all the expenses, even the public ones, which the war has involved. We must also study the budget of neutral nations; for war in our day has this particular feature, that it strikes a blow even at the finances of neutral nations, and forces them into an attitude of anxiety involving large armaments. In some countries we must extend our researches still further. Any one who should only estimate as the expenses of the Northern States of America during the Secession War, the expense they incurred as members of the Union, without taking account of those incurred by the separate states and districts as such in their preliminary outlay upon the volunteers, and their equipments of every kind, must acknowledge that he has not arrived at the total, and that his estimate would be incomplete. And this is not all. There are some countries, both primitive and advanced, where the initiative efforts of individuals are on a large scale, and where the private contributions towards war are a very important accompaniment of the public expense. The gifts furnished to the Czar by the Russian aristocracy, and all that English and American patriotism so largely contributed as offerings, equipments, or supplies, should be also taken account of. As regards Russia, or England, these private contributions mount up to a hundred million francs, and as regards America, to a thousand millions.

And at length, when we have made all these calculations, shall we then have accomplished our task? By no means. All the private losses, the ravage of the lands, the spoiling of crops; in case of siege or maritime war, the ruin of cities, and the destruction of shipping;—all these losses, impossible to be estimated, must be always kept in view, although they cannot be calculated. And even this

is not the whole. For by the side of these losses, which we may term positive ones, and which consist in the material destruction of acquired wealth, we must take account of the losses which we may term negative, and which are involved in the stagnation of business, the dullness of commerce, and the stoppage of industry. All these ruinous effects, which the curse of war accumulates, escape our statistics; but they are not the least part of that curse.

CRIMEAN WAR.

CHAPTER I. LOSS OF LIFE IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

LOSSES BY THE FRENCH.

The Crimean War is the most murderous of those European wars of which the calamities have been scientifically calculated with some degree of precision. In the estimate of the loss of men, we shall chiefly take for our guide the report of Dr. Chenu to the Army Board of Health. This valuable document possesses the double merit of being official and scientific; it emanates, in fact, from the Ministry of War, and obtained from the Academy of Sciences the grand prize for Statistics.

The French had to struggle against three great dangers—the cholera, the enemy's fire, and the scurvy. In the month of September, 1854, our army had not yet seen the enemy, but it had already lost 8,084 men chiefly through cholera. Throughout the campaign disease carried off *four times* as many victims as the Russian fire. Here is the exact state of the losses of the French army as given by Dr. Chenu:—

	Rec'd into Amb'lces or Hospitals.	Killed or Dead.
Various diseases and cholera, from April 1 to Sep. 20, 1854	18,073	8,084
Ambulances in the Crimea and Hospitals at a distance from Constantinople	221,225	29,095
Hospitals at Constantinople	162,029	27,281
Killed by the enemy, or missing		10,240
Died without entering ambulances or hospitals		4,342
Loss of the <i>Sémillante</i> :—		
1. Troops on board		394
2. Marines		308
Coast infirmary and naval hospitals	34,817	846
Died in France in consequence of diseases and wounds contracted during the war, up to 31st Dec., 1857		15,025
Total	436,144	95,615

Thus, according to Dr. Chenu's calculation, France lost 95,615 men in the Crimean War. The number of men she sent to the East at different periods of the struggle form a total of 309,268; and hence we see that the number of dead are, to those sent out, nearly in the proportion of 1 to 3. It is interesting to investigate the cause of this mortality. The preceding table indicates that only 10,240 men were killed by the enemy; the number of those who sank in consequence of their wounds, was not much greater; there remains, then, about 75,000 men who died of cholera, of scurvy, or other diseases. We have seen that the cholera carried off, during the first four months of the expedition, on Turkish territory, 8,084 men; and it has been estimated that the mortality attributable to scurvy comprehended one-third of the total loss. The 20,000 men who died on the field of battle, or in consequence of their

wounds, had at least obtained a speedy death; but these 75,000 victims of cholera, of typhus, and of hospital corruption, were obliged to undergo all the delays, all the sufferings and miseries of a death of unmitigated horror.

We are bound to make this distinction between the deceased and the wounded, for the amount of the calamities of war can only be really understood when we take a correct account of the sufferings of those unnoticed multitudes slowly and needlessly consumed by disease.

If 95,615 Frenchmen were carried off by death, are we to believe that this was the limit of our losses? Are we to believe that the 214,000 soldiers who escaped death in this disastrous expedition, returned to France in the same condition in which they left it? Are we to believe that those 30,000 wounded men, whose wounds were not mortal, those 10,000 cholera patients who were discharged from the Turkish hospitals, and all those unfortunate beings tainted and emaciated by scurvy, dysentery, and many other frightful diseases, brought back to France, to agriculture, to industry, or to national service, the strength of which they had been deprived? Are we to believe that amongst the 214,000 survivors, who have spent so many days in hospitals, there are not a great proportion—a quarter at the lowest estimate, probably a third, and perhaps a half—whose health will always remain enfeebled, shattered, and prone to relapse? What an enormous and incalculable loss of strength!

LOSSES BY THE ENGLISH.

Here follow the losses of the English army:—

	Rec'd into Amb'lces or Hospitals.	Killed or Dead.
Wounded	18,283	
Died in the hospitals in consequence of wounds		1,846
Killed on the field of battle		2,756
Fever patients and otherwise diseased	144,410	
Died in hospital		16,298
Died at sea or elsewhere		1,282
Total	162,693	22,182

The effective force first despatched was 97,864 men; hence the mortality was about one-fourth. The immense superiority of the sanitary service and of the general management during the second part of the campaign, explains why the mortality was relatively less in the English than in the French army.

PIEDMONT.—The aggregate losses of Piedmont, out of an effective force of 12,000 men, were, according to Dr. Chenu:

Killed by the enemy	12
Died in consequence of wounds	16
Died of various diseases in the Crimea	1,720
Died in the hospitals of the Bosphorus	446
Died subsequently in Piedmont	?
Total	2,194

Here, again, is a mortality of 18 per cent., although the Piedmontese army took no active part in the siege.

TURKS AND RUSSIANS.

The losses of the Turks and Russians can only be conjecturally ascertained. Dr. Chenu estimates at 10,000 the number of Turks who perished by the fire of the enemy